

Exhibit A

Overview of the Unitary Status Plan for the Tucson Unitary School District:

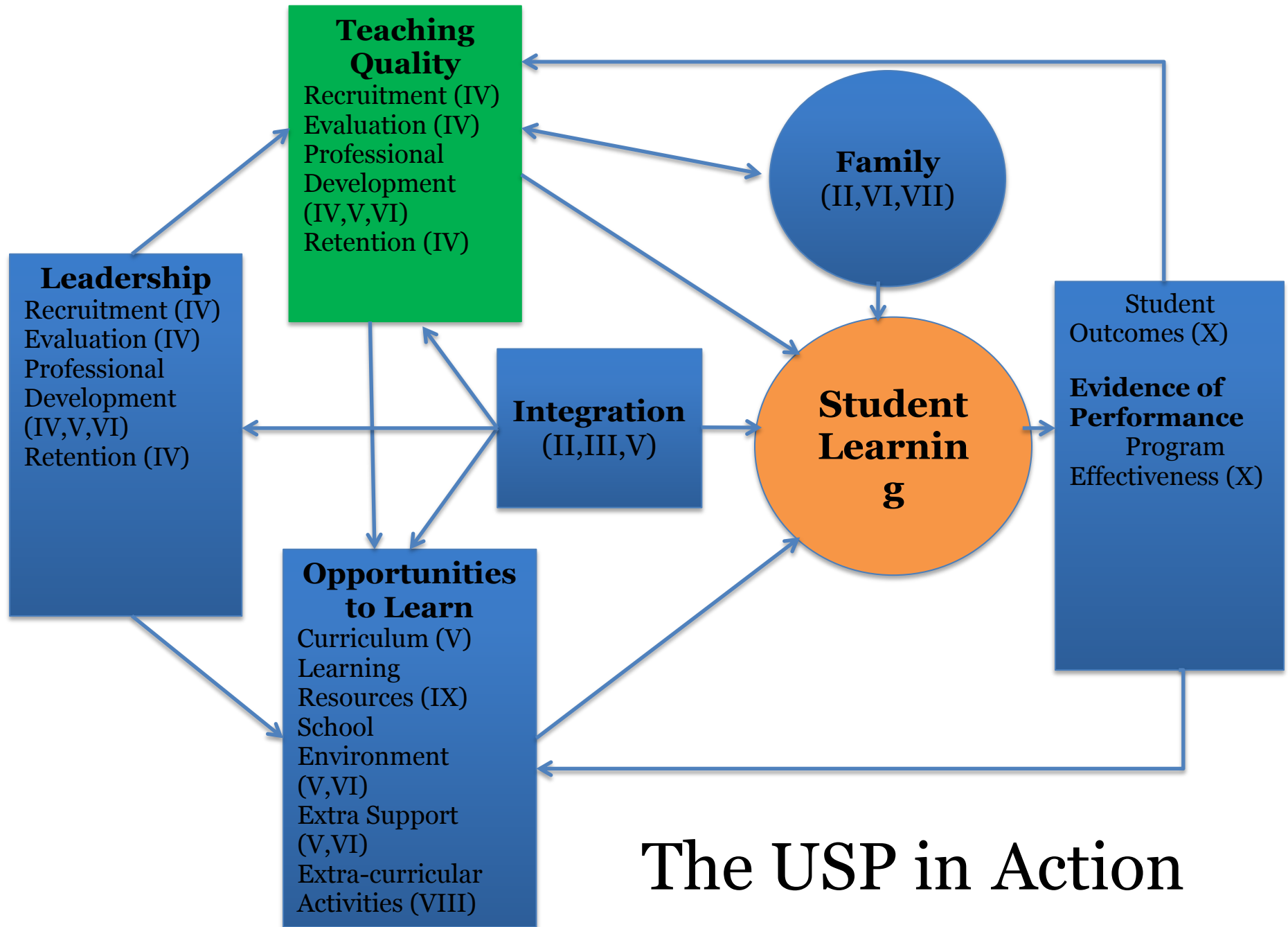
More than the Sum of its Parts

The Unitary Status Plan for the Tucson Unitary School District is comprehensive, coherent, and designed to ensure that all students, especially African American and Latino students, will learn at high levels. The attached diagram summarizes the systemic and dynamic nature of the USP and shows how the many parts of the Plan are inter-related and inter-dependent. Within each of the influences on student learning depicted in the diagram, the relevant sections of the USP are identified.

The diagram of the core elements of the USP puts student learning in the center of the Plan and highlights the important influence of high quality teaching – especially culturally responsive pedagogy – on student outcomes. Families play a critical role in the education of their children and the USP deals with family engagement in several ways, with teacher partnering with families as the basic connection. The USP recognizes that student learning is influenced by the rigor and cultural relevance of their curriculum, the safety and inclusiveness of the school environment, and the support students have to achieve and to graduate from high school on time and with the skills and dispositions they need to be successful in college and the workplace. Provisions of the USP seek to enhance the capabilities of school leaders to nurture and support effective teaching and to ensure that all students have access to rich learning experiences and the support and school conditions they need to maximize their intellectual, social and psychological development. Racial and ethnic integration of students, teachers and administrators is facilitated by the USP in order to enhance the effects of all of the school-based influences on student learning.

The USP is replete with transparent mechanisms for accountability. These mechanisms yield evidence of student progress, the proficiency of District staff, and the effectiveness of educational programs. This evidence of performance, in turn, provides incentives and direction for continuous improvement.

District level leadership and support, from both administrators and the TUSD Governing Board, do not appear in the diagram because the diagram focuses on the direct influences on student learning. Such leadership and support are, however, critically important.



The USP in Action